

NOTEBOOKS

INTRODUCTION

This month we've reviewed six desktop PCs and six notebook computers, with none costing more than £600 including VAT. The desktop computers all have dual-core processors, plenty of memory and Windows Vista (see page 78). Despite being small, light and portable, the six notebooks in this group have exactly the same advantages.

For less than £600, you can get a notebook that's smaller and quieter than any desktop PC but still fast enough for everyday computing tasks. Even if your notebook never leaves your home, being able to surf the web from your sofa and then tuck it away at the end of day can be so much more convenient than finding space for a desktop PC, monitor, keyboard and mouse.

All the notebooks here have widescreen displays and DVD writers, so they're a great way to watch video files or DVDs, and with dual-core processors inside making your own DVDs is quick and easy, too. Whatever you want to do with your computer, we'll help you find the perfect portable PC for your home.

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BUDGET NOTEBOOKS

A £600 notebook offers all the benefits of a similarly priced desktop – and saves you space as well. This month we lift the lid on six portable bargains – and reveal why you could be buying your next notebook with your groceries

Choosing a... Notebook

In this group, you'll find notebooks with loads of 3D power, plenty of storage space, great displays and long-lasting batteries, but unfortunately you won't find any one notebook with all of these admirable qualities. Most manufacturers have had to make compromises to make these computers so affordable. Therefore it's vital to consider what you want from your new computer before you buy.

Microsoft's new Windows Vista operating system comes in several versions. All but one of the notebooks in this group, and most other computers we review at *Computer Shopper*, include Windows Vista Home Premium. Eclipse's Evolution is unusual as it uses the cheaper Windows Vista Home Basic instead. This lacks some of the features found in Home Premium, such as the transparency effects of the new Aero interface and Media Center. For more details on the differences between the various Vista versions, see the 'Home ground' box opposite.

DUAL ECONOMY

A year ago, we'd have been surprised to see a dual-core processor used in an inexpensive notebook computer. Today, though, every single notebook here has a dual-core chip inside. AMD's Turion 64 X2 processors are

more than fast enough for everyday tasks such as office work but only faster models, such as the TL-56 found in Evesham's Quest A240, can keep up with Intel's Core 2 Duo chips.

Two notebooks in this group – those made by Eclipse and Gateway – use processors from Intel's newest Core 2 Duo range. These proved to be the fastest for intensive work such as video editing. Of the two, the Eclipse is marginally faster because the Gateway's T5200 chip is a little slower. It also doesn't support advanced features such as virtualisation. PC Nextday's Zoostorm uses an older Core Duo processor. It isn't quite as fast as the Core 2 Duo models, but its overall score wasn't far behind.

A notebook's keyboard and touch pad can't be upgraded, so unless you plan to use a USB mouse or you rarely type, finding a comfortable set is essential. Keyboards should be spacious and comfortable with keys that feel firm yet responsive, giving just the right amount of feedback when pressed. Touch pads should be large and accurate with buttons that don't feel soft and spongy. We carefully tested the keyboard and touch pad in each notebook, so our reviews will tell you which are comfortable and which are cramp-inducing. We'll also tell you which notebooks can



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become noisy and hot to the touch, making them unsuitable for use on your lap.

EYE SPY

A poor-quality display will make your photos and videos look poor, and can be uncomfortable to use. We've cast a critical eye over each notebook's display and our reviews will tell you which produce the best picture. The quality of displays in this group varies significantly; none is perfect, but some are far better than others.

All the notebooks here have widescreen displays with a resolution of 1,280x800 pixels. This is great for watching DVDs, working on panoramic photos or even creating expansive spreadsheets. Most of the notebooks have a display that measures 15.4in diagonally, but Eclipse's Evolution has a 14.1in screen instead. Notebooks with 14.1in displays can sometimes be lighter and more compact than their 15.4in counterparts, but the difference in size between the Evolution and the other notebooks isn't significant. They all have a D-sub socket, so you can connect an external monitor or projector for working at a desk or for giving presentations. PC Nextday's Zoostorm has a DVI port, so you can quickly connect it to many displays without having to adjust the display's settings.

Inexpensive notebook computers usually use integrated graphics processors that aren't suitable for playing modern 3D games, but two

notebooks in this group have dedicated graphics processors. Eclipse's Evolution uses an Nvidia GeForce Go 7300 chip that isn't really powerful enough to take on the latest 3D blockbusters, but PC Nextday's Zoostorm has an ATI Mobility Radeon X1600 processor that can play recent games if you reduce the detail settings.

POWER PLAY

If you'll only be using your notebook around the house, it doesn't matter how long its battery lasts. If you'll be using it when travelling, though,

it's vital to choose a system that can run for some time when away from a power socket.

For regular mobile use, we recommend choosing a notebook with a battery life of at least three hours. In this group, only Gateway's MT6825b is suitable, as it ran for two hours and 56 minutes. PC Nextday's Zoostorm is the least suited to mobile use, as it ran for just one hour and 24 minutes in our battery test. Most of the other notebooks have battery lives of around two hours, although Mesh's Pegasus endured for a reasonable two hours and 41 minutes.

Home ground Vista versions

There are six different versions of Windows Vista, but the notebooks here use either Vista Home Basic or Home Premium. Home Premium has several features that are missing in Home Basic.

The most obvious difference is Basic's lack of support for the transparent graphical effects of the new Aero interface. This means it's missing the Flip 3D mechanism for switching between windows. It also lacks the Media Center interface for browsing your music, photos and videos. Another absent feature is Windows Mobility Center. This is a central location from which several settings can be changed, including battery settings, screen brightness, speaker volume and wireless network settings. You can change these settings in Basic, but they're found in several places.

Home Basic also lacks Meeting Space, a program for organising online meetings where groups of people can exchange and work on files together simultaneously. Home Basic supports only five network connections, whereas Home Premium allows 10. Neither allows you to connect to a Windows domain, so they're not a good choice for use on a corporate network. Home Premium also includes several basic but useful applications such as a backup utility with scheduling and a video-editing and DVD-encoding suite.



ACER Aspire 5103WLMi

★★★★

£560 inc VAT

Acer's Aspire 5103WLMi has a comfortable keyboard and a large hard disk, but is let down by its disappointing performance.

FEATURES

Frequent typists will appreciate the Aspire's comfortable and responsive keyboard. The large, accurate touch pad has firm, well-made buttons. There are only three USB ports, though, so if you want to plug in more than a few peripherals you'll need a USB hub.

The Aspire's glossy display is bright and evenly lit, although white areas have a slight blue tint. We spotted some subtle banding in our colour and greyscale transitions tests, but it's one of the better displays in this group.

The Aspire is the only notebook here with no FireWire port, so connecting a digital video camera could be tricky. It has a built-in webcam, though, and a large 120GB hard disk.

PERFORMANCE

The Aspire's 1GB of RAM should be enough for running a few programs simultaneously, but its Turion 64 X2 TL-52 processor is one of the slowest in this group. It produced the lowest score in all our application performance tests, but in most cases it was only slightly slower than Mesh's Pegasus M670. It will have no problem with office work and web browsing, but it isn't a good choice if you have demanding computing needs.

The integrated Radeon XPress 1100 graphics chip isn't suitable for playing the latest games. The battery lasted for a usable two hours and four minutes, but if you work on the move the longer-lasting Mesh and Gateway notebooks would be better choices.

VERDICT

The Aspire has a sturdy chassis, a decent-quality display and a comfortable keyboard and touch pad. It's the slowest notebook in this group, though, and it's not suitable for gaming or working away from the mains. It's not bad, but in this company it looks average.

SUMMARY

- ✓ Responsive keyboard and touch pad
- ✓ Large hard disk
- ✗ Disappointing performance

GENERAL PURPOSE NOTEBOOK AMD Turion 64 X2 TL-52, 1GB RAM, 120GB disk, ATI Radeon XPress 1100 graphics, DVD+/-RW +/-DL, 15.4in widescreen LCD, 2.6kg
PART CODE LX.AX90X.115
SUPPLIER www.laptopsdirect.co.uk
DETAILS www.acer.co.uk



ECLIPSE Evolution Mobile i55VSTA

★★★★

£600 inc VAT

Eclipse's Evolution Mobile i55VSTA has a fast Core 2 Duo processor, but serious compromises have been made elsewhere to pay for it.

FEATURES

The Evolution has a 14.1in widescreen display where every other notebook here has a larger 15.4in panel. It has the same resolution of 1,280x800 pixels, but the image is slightly smaller. Despite this, the Evolution is only slightly more compact than the competition.

We were disappointed by the display's graininess. Its backlighting is uneven, too, and some light leaks from the bottom of the screen. It is unsuitable for photo manipulation. The touch pad is accurate and its buttons feel responsive yet firm. Unfortunately, however, the keyboard feels soft and springy.

A webcam and Bluetooth are included as standard, but the 80GB hard disk is cramped compared to some in this group. It is the only notebook here to come with Windows Vista Home Basic rather than Home Premium, so it lacks the new Aero desktop and Media Center.

PERFORMANCE

The Evolution is one of only two notebooks here with a Core 2 Duo processor. Its Core 2 Duo T5500 is very quick and it produced the best results in our application tests. With an overall score of 130, it should be able to handle all but the toughest tasks. The GeForce Go 7300 graphics chip isn't so powerful, though, and produced just 7.3fps in our Call of Duty 2 test. The battery lasted for two hours and eight minutes, which is reasonable but some way behind Mesh's and Gateway's notebooks.

VERDICT

The Evolution is very fast in Windows, but lacking elsewhere: its screen is disappointing and it has a limited version of Windows Vista. Unless you need the best possible performance, Gateway's cheaper MT6825b is a better choice.

SUMMARY

- ✓ Fast in Windows
- ✗ Poor-quality display and keyboard
- ✗ Windows Vista Basic; small hard disk

GENERAL PURPOSE NOTEBOOK Intel Core 2 Duo T5500, 1GB RAM, 80GB disk, Nvidia GeForce Go 7300 graphics, DVD+/-RW +/-DL, 14.1in widescreen LCD, 2.7kg
PART CODE N/A
SUPPLIER Eclipse 08707 456000
DETAILS www.eclipse-computers.com



EVESHAM Quest A240

★★★★★

£599 inc VAT

Evesham's Quest A240 is the fastest Turion-based notebook in this group, but is outpaced by the notebooks with Intel processors.

FEATURES

The Quest's keyboard is comfortable to type on and the touch pad is large and accurate, although its buttons feel stiff. The Quest is the first notebook we've seen in some time to have a serial port. Owners of older peripherals might appreciate this, but most people would find an extra USB port more useful.

Like PC Nextday's Zoostorm, the Quest has a non-glossy display. This makes it easier to use under fluorescent lights. White areas of the screen suffered from a beige cast, though, and we spotted some slight banding in our colour transition test. Our colour gradient test was displayed smoothly, though, and overall it's one of the better displays in this group.

Rubber flanges protect the CardBus and memory card slots. The chassis feels sturdy, but the area around the wrist rests is thin and more prone to flexing. The 80GB hard disk will quickly fill up if you store lots of music and videos. A three-year warranty is included.

PERFORMANCE

The Quest was the fastest Turion-based laptop here, and only the Intel-based notebooks could beat it in our tests. It did particularly well in our image-editing and multiple-applications tests, coming in only a few points behind the frontrunners, but it scored an average 118 points overall. The integrated Nvidia graphics chip isn't suitable for playing modern 3D games and ran our Call of Duty 2 test at less than 3fps. The battery lasted for just one hour and 53 minutes, which is poor.

VERDICT

Evesham's Quest A240 isn't particularly powerful and its battery is poor, but it has a decent screen and keyboard and a three-year warranty. It's good value, but not as good as Gateway's MT6825b

SUMMARY

- ✓ Decent display and keyboard
- ✓ Three-year warranty
- ✗ Poor battery; small hard disk

GENERAL PURPOSE NOTEBOOK AMD Turion 64 X2 TL-56, 1GB RAM, 80GB disk, Nvidia GeForce Go 6100 graphics, DVD+/-RW +/-DL, 15.4in widescreen LCD, 2.6kg
PART CODE QUESTA240APR07
SUPPLIER Evesham 08701 609500
DETAILS www.evesham.com



GATEWAY MT6825b



£500 inc VAT



Gateway's MT6825b is available exclusively from Tesco. It may be £100 cheaper than other notebooks here, but it's surprisingly powerful.

FEATURES

The MT6825b has a sturdy chassis, although the panel under the DVD writer flexes under pressure. The metallic wrist rests look nice, but the lid has a rough, sandpaper-like texture. The underside can become very warm during use.

The keyboard is spacious, but the keys have a springy action that can make long periods of typing tiresome. Anyone who frequently uses keyboard shortcuts will be irritated by the way that the Control and Function keys have been switched around. The touch pad is smooth and accurate, with buttons that feel just right.

The display isn't very bright, so white areas have a greyish cast. There was some coarseness in the darker areas of our greyscale test, so it's less than ideal for precise photo manipulation. The front-mounted speakers have a reasonable amount of bass but sound harsh.

PERFORMANCE

The MT6825b's T5200 Core 2 Duo processor is slightly slower than the T5500 used in Eclipse's Evolution Mobile i55VSTA, but it lagged only slightly behind the Evolution in most of our tests. It uses slower memory than some notebooks here, so it fell back a few points in our image-editing test, but its score of 123 points overall is the second-best in the group.

The Intel GMA 950 integrated graphics chip couldn't run our Call of Duty 2 test, so the MT6825b isn't suitable for playing modern 3D games. Its battery was the best in this group, though; it ran for nearly three hours.

VERDICT

The MT6825b isn't perfect, but it gives you plenty of power and a good battery at a very low price. It's a bargain.

SUMMARY

- ✓ Fast in applications
- ✓ Good battery life
- ✗ Springy keyboard

GENERAL PURPOSE NOTEBOOK Intel Core 2 Duo T5200, 1GB RAM, 100GB disk, Intel Graphics Media Accelerator 950 graphics, DVD+/-RW +/-DL, 15.4in widescreen LCD, 2.9kg
PART CODE N/A
SUPPLIER <http://direct.tesco.com>
DETAILS <http://uk.gateway.com>



MESH Pegasus M670



£599 inc VAT

Mesh's Pegasus M670 has a decent battery, but a poor keyboard and average performance.

FEATURES

Mesh's Pegasus M670 is the only notebook here with a number pad, so entering figures is quick and easy. It isn't much larger than the other notebooks, though, so some keys on the rest of the keyboard have been made narrower to accommodate it. This cramped layout makes it easy to hit the Insert key accidentally when reaching for the Delete key, and it's also too easy to brush against the oversensitive touch pad accidentally. The squishy keys are unpleasant to type on, too.

The black and silver chassis is attractive, with all the usual ports located on its sides for easy access, but it doesn't feel very rigid. A USB mouse and integrated webcam are also included, but the 80GB hard disk is one of the smaller ones in this group and could be quickly filled with media files.

The display isn't suitable for serious photo-editing. Images have a blue tint, and we noticed some coarseness in our greyscale transition and colour wheel tests. The speakers sound muffled and lack bass.

PERFORMANCE

The Pegasus is equipped with 1GB of RAM, but its TL-50 Turion processor was one of the slowest in this group. It scored 105 points overall in our application benchmarks, making it the second-slowest in the group.

Like the Evesham Quest A240, the Pegasus uses an Nvidia GeForce Go 6100 integrated graphics chip. It ran our Call of Duty 2 test at less than 2fps. Its battery ran for two hours and 41 minutes, making it the second-best here.

VERDICT

The Pegasus has a decent battery, but it's not particularly fast in Windows applications and its keyboard is poor. The small hard disk and so-so display are disappointing, too.

SUMMARY

- ✓ Decent battery life
- ✗ Poor keyboard and touch pad
- ✗ Small hard disk

GENERAL PURPOSE NOTEBOOK AMD Turion 64 X2 TL-50, 1GB RAM, 80GB disk, Nvidia GeForce Go 6100 graphics, DVD+/-RW +/-DL, 15.4in widescreen LCD, 2.6kg
PART CODE N/A
SUPPLIER Mesh 08447 360440
DETAILS www.meshcomputers.com



PC NEXTDAY Zoostorm 52-4610



£599 inc VAT

PC Nextday's Zoostorm 52-4610 is quick in 3D applications, but its battery is disappointing.

FEATURES

The Zoostorm's keyboard is large and well spaced, but the keys feel soft. The small touchpad is accurate, but its buttons are spongy. The cooling fan is noisy during intensive tasks, and the left wrist rest and the underside of the chassis become very warm.

We noticed subtle shifts in the display's colour accuracy at different viewing angles. We could see some banding in our greyscale and colour transition tests, and white areas looked greyish. Anyone who spends time editing digital photos will need a separate monitor to adjust colours accurately. Luckily, the Zoostorm is the only notebook here with a DVI port. This allows you to connect an external monitor without having to fiddle with settings.

The Zoostorm also has a S/PDIF socket for connecting a surround-sound amplifier and a spacious 120GB hard disk that gives you lots of room for media files.

PERFORMANCE

The Zoostorm's Core Duo T2250 processor couldn't keep up with the Core 2 Duo-based notebooks in our multiple-application and video-encoding tests. It did well in our image-manipulation benchmark, though. It scored 119 overall, placing it in the middle of this group.

The Radeon X1600 graphics card is the best in the group and produced 17.2fps in our Call of Duty 2 test. You'll be able to play modern 3D games if you reduce their detail settings. Unfortunately, the battery lasted for less than an hour and a half. This makes the Zoostorm unsuitable for almost any mobile use.

VERDICT

The Zoostorm is the best notebook here for gaming, but it has a terrible battery and a poor keyboard and display. It's great for gamers, but anyone else should buy Gateway's MT6825b.

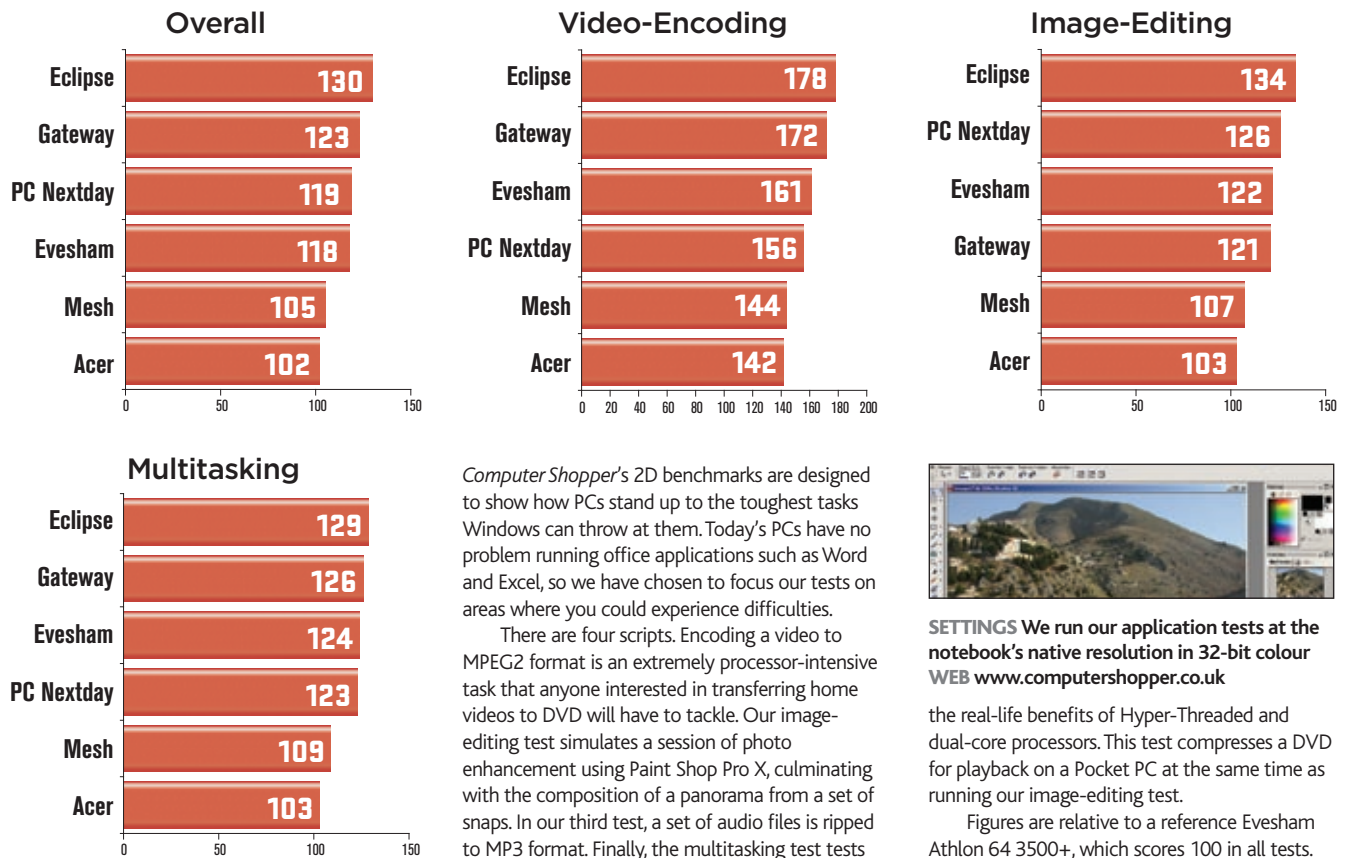
SUMMARY

- ✓ Good 3D performance
- ✓ Large hard disk
- ✗ Terrible battery life; poor keyboard and display

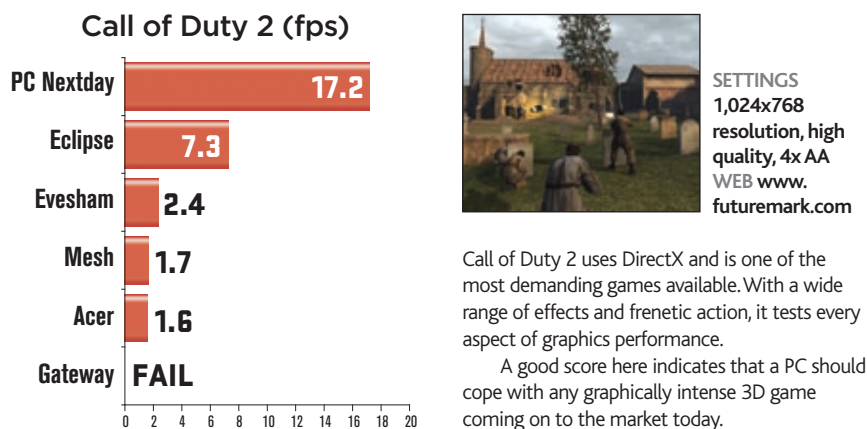
GENERAL PURPOSE NOTEBOOK Intel Core Duo T2250, 1GB RAM, 120GB disk, ATI Mobility Radeon X1600 graphics, DVD+/-RW +/-DL, 15.4in widescreen LCD, 2.8kg
PART CODE N/A
SUPPLIER www.pcnextday.co.uk
DETAILS www.pcnextday.co.uk

BENCHMARKS

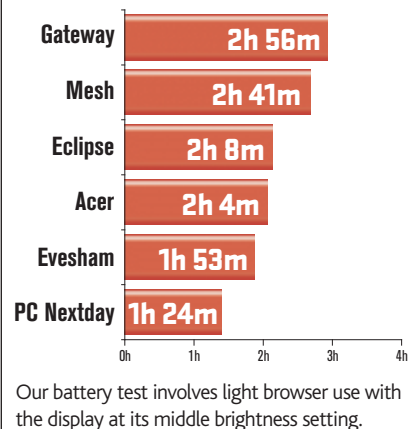
2D Performance Shopper application tests



3D Performance Call of Duty 2



Battery life Run time



Labs verdict Budget notebooks

Buying a cheap notebook no longer means having to settle for substandard components and outdated technology. No matter what you want from an inexpensive portable computer, you'll find a perfect notebook PC in this group test.

PC Nextday's Zoostorm 52-4610 has a limited battery life and an undistinguished chassis, but it is quick in 3D and it has a DVI port for connecting an external monitor. If

you want to play 3D games, it's the one to buy. If you want to work rather than play, however, then Evesham's Quest A240 would be a better choice. It's not particularly powerful, but it is the only notebook in this group with both a decent display and a keyboard that's comfortable to type on for long periods. It also has a three-year warranty.

If you want a computer that's ideal for general use at home, though, pick Gateway's



GATEWAY
MT6825b
 ★★★★★



MT6825b. It's one of the most powerful notebooks here in Windows, and has the best battery life in the group. Best of all, it's a supermarket sweep at just £500 from Tesco. It wins our Best Buy award.



MANUFACTURER	ACER	ECLIPSE	EVESHAM	GATEWAY	MESH	PC NEXTDAY
Model	Aspire 5103WLMi	Evolution Mobile i55VSTA	Quest A240	MT6825b	Pegasus M670	Zoostorm 52-4610
Rating	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★
Processor	AMD Turion 64 X2 TL-52	Intel Core 2 Duo T5500	AMD Turion 64 X2 TL-56	Intel Core 2 Duo T5200	AMD Turion 64 X2 TL-50	Intel Core Duo T2250
Speed	1.6GHz	1.66GHz	1.8GHz	1.6GHz	1.6GHz	1.73GHz
Memory installed	1GB	1GB	1GB	1GB	1GB	1GB
Memory slots (free)	2 (0)	2 (1)	2 (0)	2 (0)	2 (1)	2 (1)
Max memory	4GB	2GB	2GB	2GB	2GB	2GB
BIOS	Phoenix	AMI	Phoenix	Phoenix	AMI	Insyde
Dimensions(HxWxD)	31x357x266mm	37x333x250mm	32x360x265mm	34x360x263mm	32x360x260mm	35x360x255mm
Weight	2.6kg	2.7kg	2.6kg	2.9kg	2.6kg	2.8kg
Sound	RealTek HD	SoundMax HD	RealTek HD	SigmaTel HD	RealTek ALC883	RealTek HD
Pointing device	Touch pad	Touch pad	Touch pad	Touch pad	Touch pad	Touch pad
DISPLAY						
Screen size	15.4in widescreen LCD	14.1in widescreen LCD	15.4in widescreen LCD	15.4in widescreen LCD	15.4in widescreen LCD	15.4in widescreen LCD
Graphics adaptor	ATI Radeon XPress 1100	Nvidia GeForce Go 7300	Nvidia GeForce Go 6100	Intel Graphics Media Accelerator 950	Nvidia GeForce Go 6100	ATI Mobility Radeon X1600
Graphics outputs	D-sub	D-sub	D-sub	D-sub, S-video	D-sub, S-video	DVI, S-video
Graphics memory	128MB shared	128MB dedicated	32MB dedicated (plus up to 256MB shared)	224MB shared	128MB dedicated (plus up to 256MB shared)	256MB dedicated
Native resolution	1,280x800	1,280x800	1,280x800	1,280x800	1,280x800	1,280x800
STORAGE						
Hard disk (available)	120GB (104GB)	80GB (75GB)	80GB (56GB)	100GB (84GB)	80GB (70GB)	120GB (106GB)
Optical drive	DVD+/-RW +/-DL	DVD+/-RW +/-DL	DVD+/-RW +/-DL	DVD+/-RW +/-DL	DVD+/-RW +/-DL	DVD+/-RW +/-DL
Optical drive speeds	Matshita UJ-850S (8X DVD+R, 8X DVD-R, 6X DVD+RW, 6X DVD-RW, 24X DVD+R DL, 24X CD-R, 10X CD-RW, 8X DVD-ROM, 24X CD-ROM)	TSST TS-L632D (8X DVD+R, 8X DVD-R, 8X DVD+RW, 6X DVD-RW, 6X DVD+R DL, 6X DVD-R DL, 24X CD-R, 24X CD-RW, 8X DVD-ROM, 24X CD-ROM)	Philips SDVD8820 (8X DVD+R, 8X DVD-R, 8X DVD+RW, 6X DVD-RW, 6X DVD+R DL, 4X DVD-R DL, 24X CD-R, 24X CD-RW, 8X DVD-ROM, 24X CD-ROM)	NEC AD-7540A (8X DVD+R, 8X DVD-R, 8X DVD+RW, 6X DVD-RW, 4X DVD+R DL, 4X DVD-R DL, 5X DVD-RAM, 24X CD-R, 24X CD-RW, 8X DVD-ROM, 24X CD-ROM)	LG GSA-T10N (8X DVD+R, 8X DVD-R, 8X DVD+RW, 6X DVD-RW, 4X DVD+R DL, 4X DVD-R DL, 5X DVD-RAM, 24X CD-R, 16X CD-RW, 8X DVD-ROM, 24X CD-ROM)	TSST SN-S082D (8X DVD+R, 8X DVD-R, 8X DVD+RW, 6X DVD-RW, 6X DVD+R DL, 4X DVD-R DL, 5X DVD-RAM, 24X CD-R, 24X CD-RW, 8X DVD-ROM, 24X CD-ROM)
PORTS AND EXPANSION						
USB2 ports	3	4	3	4	4	4
FireWire	0	1	1	1	1	1
Infrared port	No	No	No	No	No	No
Bluetooth	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
Networking	10/100, 802.11b/g	10/100/1,000, 802.11a/b/g	10/100, 802.11b/g	10/100, 802.11a/b/g	10/100, 802.11b/g	10/100, 802.11a/b/g
PC card slots	1x CardBus	1x CardBus	1x CardBus	1x CardBus	1x ExpressCard/54	1x ExpressCard/54
Modem	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Legacy ports	None	None	Serial	None	None	None
Memory card reader	Secure Digital, MultiMedia Card, Memory Stick Pro, Smart Media, xD	Secure Digital, MultiMedia Card, Memory Stick	Secure Digital, MultiMedia Card, Memory Stick	Secure Digital, MultiMedia Card, Memory Stick Pro	Secure Digital, MultiMedia Card, Memory Stick	Secure Digital, MultiMedia Card, Memory Stick Pro
Other ports	None	None	None	None	None	Optical S/PDIF
MISCELLANEOUS						
Carrying case	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Direct CD control	No	No	No	No	No	No
Operating system	Windows Vista Home Premium	Windows Vista Home Basic	Windows Vista Home Premium	Windows Vista Home Premium	Windows Vista Home Premium	Windows Vista Home Premium
Operating system restore option	Restore partition	Windows disc	Restore partition, restore disc	Restore partition, restore disc	Windows disc and restore partition	Windows disc
Software included	CyberLink PowerProducer 3, NTI CD Maker 7, Norton Antivirus 2005	None	Bullguard Security and Antivirus 7.1, Microsoft Works 8.5, Sonic Media Creator 9	Microsoft Works 8.5	None	Ahead Nero 7
Other standard accessories	Integrated webcam	Integrated 1-megapixel webcam	None	None	Integrated 1.3-megapixel webcam, USB optical mouse	None
Optional extras (inc VAT)	None	None	None	None	None	None
BUYING INFORMATION						
Company founded	1976	1993	1983	1985	1986	1993
Employees	6,000	30	418	Not disclosed	195	Not disclosed
Tech support staff	160	7	82	Not disclosed	20	14
Tech support times	9am-5pm Mon-Fri	9.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri	9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5.30pm Sat	9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm Sat-Sun	9am-5pm Mon-Fri	9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri
Parts and labour warranty	One year RTB	One year RTB	One year onsite, two years RTB	One year RTB	Two years RTB	One year onsite
Price inc VAT	£560 inc VAT	£600 inc VAT	£599 inc VAT	£500 inc VAT	£599 inc VAT	£599 inc VAT
Price ex VAT	£477	£511	£510	£425	£511	£511
Details	www.acer.co.uk	www.eclipse-computers.com	www.evesham.com	http://uk.gateway.com	www.meshcomputers.com	www.pcnextday.co.uk
Supplier	www.laptopsdirect.co.uk	Eclipse 08707 456000	Evesham 08701 609500	http://direct.tesco.com	Mesh 08447 360440	www.pcnextday.co.uk
Part code	LX.AX90X.115	None	QUESTA240APR07	None	None	None